

BALANCED ECOSYSTEMS

Cleared away burned debris
and trees in combination with grazing
and thinning projects

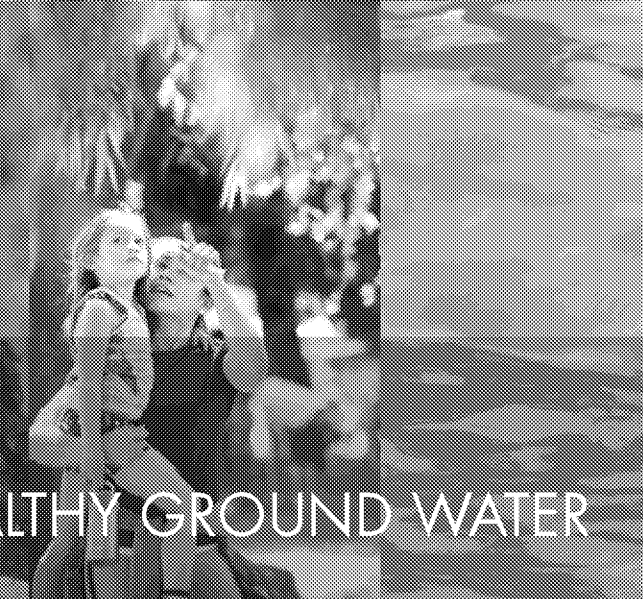


VITALITY

Rehabilitated over 2,000
acres of land burned
during the fires



HEALTHY GROUND WATER



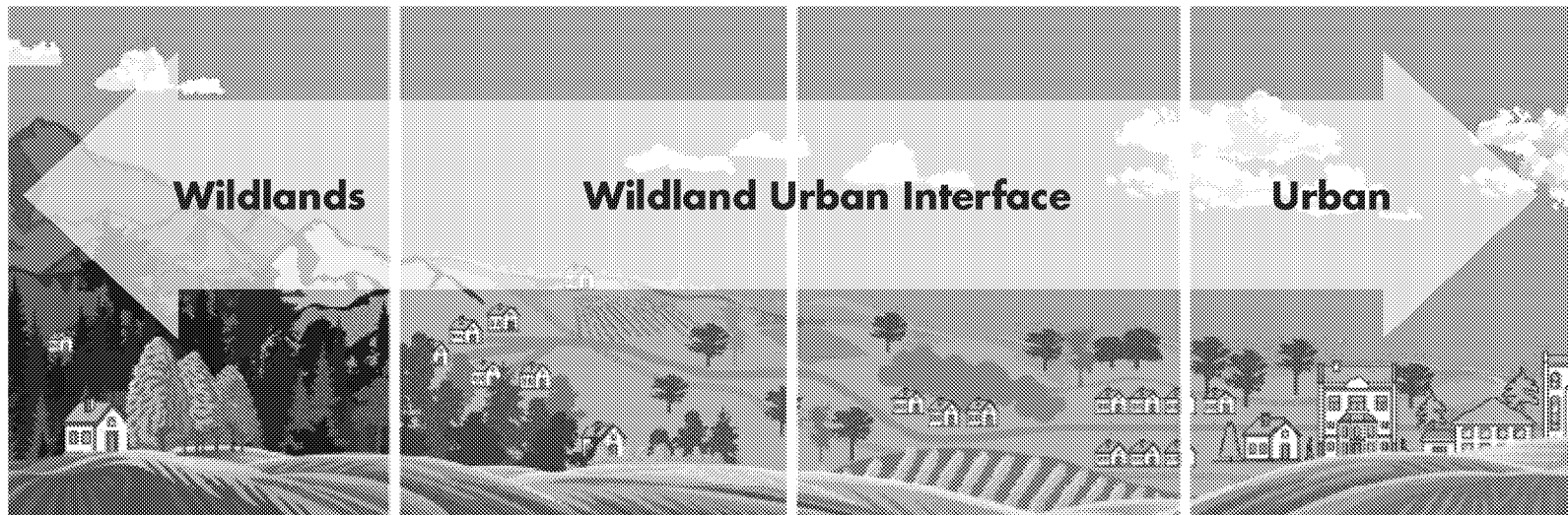
BACKGROUND

The diverse ecosystems of our landscape continue to attract and shape resident and visitor experiences and support the local economy. The variety of our natural assets and the outstanding scenic beauty of our landscape provide sustenance and resources, and prompt tourism. Still, they also pose challenges and hazards.

Recent trends in rainfall, streamflow, and soil moisture, as well as fire occurrence and patterns, have identified vulnerabilities to our natural resources and communities. These have highlighted the importance of wildfire mitigation, flood prediction, and surface and groundwater supply reliability.

Various local plans, policies, programs and regulations are already in place to minimize exposure of communities, people, and property to hazards. The County Strategic Priority 'Healthy Watersheds' effort was initiated to improve natural resources and watershed conditions. Local Hazard Mitigation Plans for the County and Sonoma County Water Agency

**WILDLAND-URBAN
INTERFACE (WUI) are
areas where homes are
built near or among
lands prone to wildland
fire. The WUI is not a
place, per se, but an
area that meets a set
of conditions.**



BACKGROUND

(Sonoma Water) are in place. The Sonoma County General Plan 2020 Land Use Element recognized limitations to development in areas that are constrained by the natural limitations of the land. The Sonoma County Code on fire safe standards was enhanced to include reduction of hazardous vegetation and combustible material. The Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan (CWPP) identified reduction priorities related to Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) wildfire issues. Fire Safe Sonoma (FSS) worked with the community on education and preparedness efforts. County review and decisions regarding new development and remodels allowed site and structural hazards to be assessed, avoided, or mitigated. These efforts continue to strengthen our communities and prioritize preparedness and resiliency against natural and human-caused hazards in the future.

Impact of Fires on Natural Resources. In addition to the tragic loss of life and the destruction of homes, businesses, and public infrastructure from the October 2017 fires, wildlands and working landscapes were also burned. Several short-term adverse impacts occurred and some potential long-term changes may result, although natural systems often recover adequately with limited assistance.

State agencies formed a Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT) to conduct an initial rapid assessment of post-fire geologic and hydrologic hazards to life-safety and property (collectively known as Values at Risk or VARS). The immediate focus was on protection of life and property, along with damage that would affect the flow of water, increase erosion and sedimentation and/or the potential for landslides, debris flows, and mudflows. The WERT reports identified over 200 VAR locations within the perimeters of the Nuns and Tubbs fires. Additional VARs were identified and assessed by technical specialists from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California Department of Water Resources, and the North Coast and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Boards working in conjunction with local agencies and Cal Fire. This group of technical specialists also evaluated the potential imminent threat to water quality.

BACKGROUND

Wildfire can have profound effects on watershed processes, and may modify the rainfall and runoff factors influencing erosion and sedimentation and stream channels for several years. Wildland fires may have long-term impacts on the biological environment, but there are complex relationships and interactions that make it difficult to predict and understand all effects. Some benefits to fire-adapted or fire-dependent plant species may occur, particularly from low-intensity, frequent burns. Severe, catastrophic fires may result in a complete alteration of the plant species and community. The direct or indirect effects on special status biological species have not been predicted.

Post-Fire Situation/Ongoing Efforts. Lands damaged by the fires and fire suppression efforts will adjust and respond through natural processes. Some areas will need physical rehabilitation and restoration, active management, monitoring and follow-up measures. Such efforts would be targeted to prevent runoff of toxic materials and sediments into drinking water supplies and sensitive habitats; to minimize the threat of flooding, landslides, and other safety hazards; and to facilitate ecosystem recovery that trends toward an improved, more resilient condition.

Sonoma County has been leading the local recovery effort, working closely with other local, State, and Federal agencies to address the overall impacts of the fires, including those to natural resources. The County has been co-leading the Local Agencies Watershed Task Force (WTF), with representation from several County agencies and departments, including Sonoma Water, the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space), Permit Sonoma, and Sonoma County Regional Parks (Regional Parks).

Ag + Open Space performed and supported response and recovery on their owned lands and easements. It is conducting several fire recovery and resiliency research and planning studies and has integrated these considerations into its programs. Ag + Open Space also provides technical input to winter storm hazard analysis and forest management and stream system condition targets. Ag + Open Space and Sonoma Water fund the Natural Resources specialist working in the Office of Recovery and Resiliency.

BACKGROUND

Sonoma Water coordinated with numerous local state, and federal agencies during response and early recovery, interacting with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), leading a study (in partnership with Pepperwood, Ag+Open Space and ORR) conducted by the USGS to characterize post-fire soil conditions, and the National Weather Service (NWS) to improve storm hazard forecasting and alerts. They prepared cautionary signage and mailings during the first post-fire winter. Sonoma Water field staff also worked with Cal Fire during early recovery efforts to removed severely damaged vegetation along public roadways.

Permit Sonoma has overseen storm water quality throughout fire response and as rebuilding proceeds, to support protection of water quality consistent with the MS4 permit. In coordination with other partners in the Watershed Task Force, they have been educating landowners, homeowners and contractors about their responsibilities and the resources and options to help protect streams and water resources.

The Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures (Agricultural Commissioner) helped secure permission and facilitate special logistics to allow access for essential functions on working lands during the fire evacuations.

University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) provided oversight and evaluation of temporary livestock sheltering and performed fire damage assessments related to FSA claims. UCCE immediately initiated and is continuing to research several key post-fire public health, agricultural, and ecosystem concerns.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Sonoma County has the opportunity to identify and target priority areas for active management of vegetative structure and fuel loadings to address potential wildfire behavior, reduce wildfire losses, ensure firefighter and public safety, and improve landscape resilience to fire, flood, and drought. These efforts will build upon our past investments in data collection, scientific studies, and advanced technology applications. Effective and efficient fuel load reduction and natural lands management that make wise use of financial and human resources requires a clear and objective understanding of forest¹⁵ management issues and priority locations. Active management of public and private land holdings in high priority areas would be key to reducing hazardous fuels in and around communities.

Science-based outreach and education about forest health and forest management will be needed to develop and implement solutions, particularly since the forest lands in Sonoma County are primarily under private ownership. Many private landowners are unaware of the techniques and the resources to implement forest health protection measures. Treatment

WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE

The Federal Register provides guiding definitions of various types of Wildland-Urban-Interface (WUI). In general, WUI conditions are where people and their development meet wildland fuels.

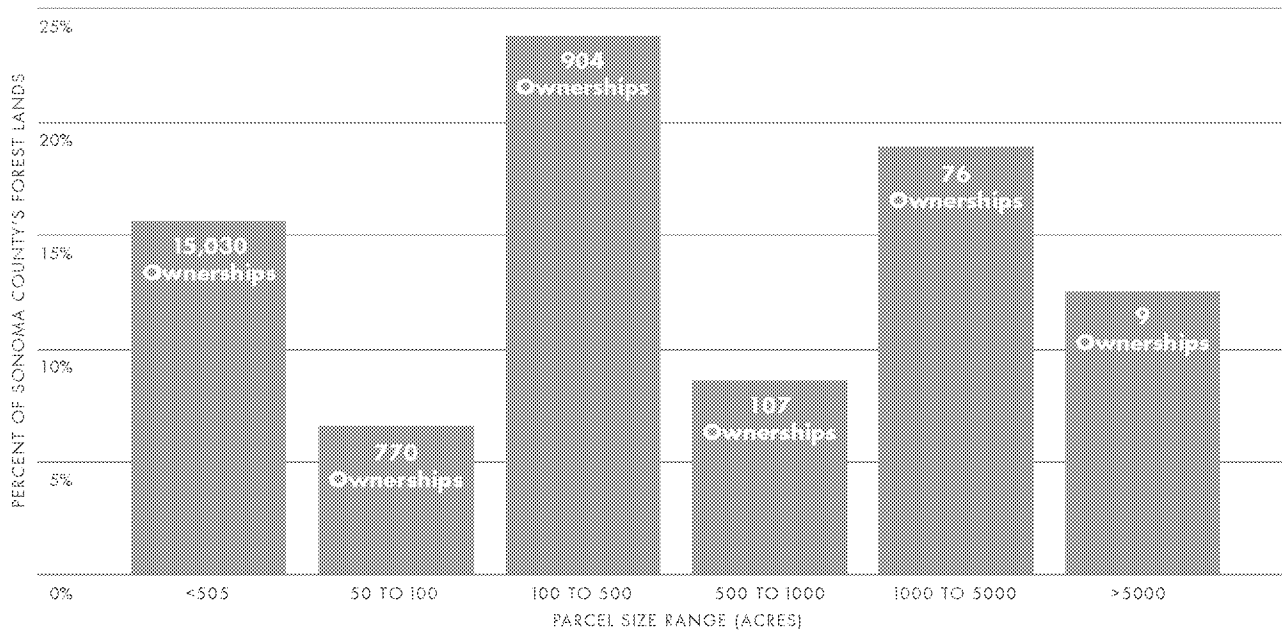
INTERFACE WUI is where the developed community has a clear edge, there are more than three structures per acre and population densities are over 250 people per square mile.

INTERMIX WUI are lands with structures scattered across wildland areas, as few as one per 40 acres, and population densities are low (less than 250 people per square mile).

¹⁵ Throughout this document, the term "Forest" is used to refer to all woody vegetation types in our vicinity including forests, woodlands, savannas, and shrub land.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

methods include combinations of wood product harvesting, mechanical thinning, and grazing, invasive species removal and prescribed burning. Many of these 'private' forested lands are within the 'State Responsibility Area' (see map in Community Preparedness section) where Cal Fire has primary financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires. Cal Fire can engage in cooperative projects with private landowners. The County does not have National Forest lands, which limits our options to enter agreements with the federal government to jointly accomplish watershed work.



*Forest lands are defined as those with conifer, mixed-conifer-hardwood, or hardwood forest in the Sonoma County fine-scale vegetation map.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Sonoma County has large land-holdings, small parcels, home sites, and lots—all of which need to be dealt with differently. While there are many opportunities, “there are no simple solutions to creating a resilient forest, and tradeoffs accompany every form of fuels treatment... There will be needs to identify and make policy and regulatory changes to streamline implementation of the Forest Carbon Plan.”¹⁶

Substantial obstacles to removal of small-diameter trees and brush that are part of excess fuel loads include a lack of economic uses and infrastructure in the region. However, recent actions at the State level are strengthening policy, regulation, and funding support for improved forest health and wildfire prevention within the context of climate change. A Governor’s Forest Management Task Force was established in 2018 of state, local, tribal, and federal agencies working in partnership to increase the rate of forest treatments and expand wood product markets by region. They are seeking ways to do this in alignment with the California Forest Carbon Plan. Recent legislation also provides funding for forest health, fire prevention, and fuel reduction over the next five years, reduces barriers for non-industrial fuel treatments related to defensible space, and prompts policy and regulation changes that will support land use decisions forming and maintaining fuel breaks and greenbelts.

There are no simple solutions to creating a resilient forest, and tradeoffs accompany every form of fuels treatment. There will be needs to identify and make policy and regulatory changes to streamline implementation of the Forest Carbon Plan.¹⁶

¹⁶ Forest Climate Action Team. May 2018. California Forest Carbon Plan: Managing Our Forest Landscapes in a Changing Climate. Sacramento, CA. 178p

COMMUNITY INPUT

The Natural Resources area of the Framework has benefited greatly from outreach from local non-governmental organizations and interest groups. It has also benefited from feedback from the general public. The input received has helped shape our vision statement and focus on key high-level goals. Community comments have been consistent with and supportive of the general goals and proposed actions. The forest fuel load reduction goal was rated very important and the community expressed a desire for effective, science-based decisions and prioritization of actions. The community also supported the need for education on the importance of vegetation management on public and private lands. The public also requested focused outreach in WUIs, use of tribal knowledge, building public trust, and supporting landowner actions. The public also rated stream system enhancements very important. The range of ideas and suggestions included the need to protect and monitor natural and working lands; potential changes to stream setbacks or buffers; desires to link science with land use policies and patterns; engagement with volunteers, community groups, and NGOs in planning and implementation; and financial and regulatory assistance for riparian landowners. Feedback also included a strong desire that science-based public information and education inform decision-making about land use, fuel load reduction, and watershed management. Several suggested phasing such programs in to reduce burden on survivors of the 2017 fires.

“Sonoma County has large land-holdings, small parcels, home sites, and lots—all of which need to be dealt with differently.”

—COMMUNITY MEMBER





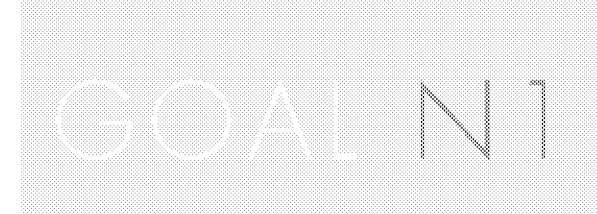
STRATEGY AREA 5
Natural Resources

GOALS

1. Reduce fuel loads in forests, woodlands and shrub lands strategically to lower wildfire hazards to communities and sensitive habitats, improve delivery of resources and amenities people need, and move forests on a trajectory of increased resistance to drought, disease, and insects.
2. Assess and support burned watersheds' recovery, and protect and enhance stream systems to lessen wildfire danger to communities, support water supply and drought tolerance, and provide flood attenuation while sustaining ecological functions and biological diversity.
3. Build on prior and continuing investments in natural resources acquisitions, monitoring, technical studies and partnerships to integrate best available science into outreach efforts, policy development, regulations, incentives, and land use planning decisions.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources



GOAL N1

Reduce fuel loads in forests, woodlands and shrub lands strategically to lower wildfire hazards to communities and sensitive habitats, improve delivery of resources and amenities people need, and move forests on a trajectory of increased resistance to drought, disease, and insects.

PROPOSED ACTIONS:	0-1 YEAR THROUGH 2019	2-3 YEARS 2020-2021	3+ YEARS 2022+
Develop strategic, proactive fuel load reduction and landscape resiliency priorities using key criteria (e.g., wildfire risk, public health and safety, water supply needs, economic impacts, and ecosystem sensitivity) using decision-support tools with objective data and expert advisors.			
Evaluate options for active management of forests, woodlands and shrub lands on public and private lands for fuel and fire breaks that decrease risks to developed communities.			
Strengthen regional forest stewardship to improve leadership, oversight, training, and funding of fuel reduction projects, improve data resources and sharing to support environmental protections and facilitate effective fuel reduction opportunities for landowner and community-based projects.			

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N1

GOAL N1

Reduce fuel loads in forests, woodlands and shrub lands strategically to lower wildfire hazards to communities and sensitive habitats, improve delivery of resources and amenities people need, and move forests on a trajectory of increased resistance to drought, disease, and insects.

ACTIONS COMPLETED:

- ✓ Various County agencies and organizations have begun ongoing efforts to support more sustainable local and regional forest management, including:
 - Participating in the Governor's Forest Management Task Force (FMTF), the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), and the North Coast Resource Partnership (NCRP). Our participation will elevate our profile, keep us up-to-date on regulatory, funding, and policy issues, and capitalize on lessons learned elsewhere.
 - Engaging independent experts to identify and evaluate organizing options and economic strategies that create and maintain resilient natural and working lands effectively, especially given the high percentage of private forest land ownership in the County.
 - Joining collaborative efforts of local, state, tribal and federal agencies with landowners and community groups to train, test, and implement fuel reduction using a wide range of treatment methods.
- ✓ The Ag + Open Space District initiated several monitoring, research, and preparedness improvement efforts, including a priority focus on fuels reduction for all properties, that build upon existing grazing operations, and is participating in vegetation management discussions throughout the county. They were awarded a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) grant to evaluate the response of working and natural lands to the fires, including burn severity correlated to vegetation cover type.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N1

GOAL N1

Reduce fuel loads in forests, woodlands and shrub lands strategically to lower wildfire hazards to communities and sensitive habitats, improve delivery of resources and amenities people need, and move forests on a trajectory of increased resistance to drought, disease, and insects.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ Sonoma Water has incorporated consideration of fuel load reduction benefits into the multi-benefit ratings within Storm Water Resource Plans that prioritize potential projects for state funding requests.
- ✓ Regional Parks has expedited grazing and thinning projects to reduce fuel loads, is collaborating with the Mayacama Golf Club on a fuel break, and pursuing funding to allow: improvements to grazing infrastructure; retrofitting to improve fire protection of facilities and emergency access; and, adding fire management in the stewardship plans for each park.
- ✓ The Agricultural Commissioner continues to support invasive species control and management on private lands disturbed by the fires and/or firefighting efforts. It is conducting outreach with pest control businesses to ensure compliance with applicable pesticide regulations within the fire areas during rebuilding and vegetation recovery.
- ✓ UCCE convened several workshops focused on forest and land management strategies to ensure a resilient rural landscape including discussions on potential prescribed fire and grazing programs and specific fire preparedness for home sites and large working parcels. The UC Master Gardeners are partnering with other agencies to apply fire and drought research to our local setting, offer trainings, and facilitate implementation of resilient landscaping principles as the fire-damaged areas recover.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N1

GOAL N1

Reduce fuel loads in forests, woodlands and shrub lands strategically to lower wildfire hazards to communities and sensitive habitats, improve delivery of resources and amenities people need, and move forests on a trajectory of increased resistance to drought, disease, and insects.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ UCCE has pursued studies and funding regarding the influence of varied land management practices on burn severity and fire recovery, and conducted surveys about grazing management, fire science, ecosystem services valuations, and the healthy soil initiative.
- ✓ Easements and acquisition efforts by Ag + Open Space since the 2017 fires included burned parcels within the WUI that have appropriate ecosystem and fire hazard reduction benefits.
- ✓ Under a recently awarded Cal Fire grant, TPW and FES will undertake a project to assess fuel risks and tree mortality along 83 miles of public right of way in northwest Sonoma County, treat 30 high priority miles, and provide chipper services for fuels reduction by private parties.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N2

GOAL N2

Assess and support burned watersheds' recovery, and protect and enhance stream systems to lessen wildfire danger to communities, support water supply and drought tolerance, and provide flood attenuation while sustaining ecological functions and biological diversity.

PROPOSED ACTIONS:	0-1 YEAR THROUGH 2019	2-3 YEARS 2020-2021	3+ YEARS 2022+
Assess Mark West Creek and other priority burned watersheds to analytically identify and rank recovery and rehabilitation needs and prepare for possible secondary hazards over the next few winters.			
Incorporate fire, flood and drought resiliency considerations in land use decisions involving riparian zones and functional riparian zone protection or enhancement incentives and regulations.			
Prioritize improved resilience of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas to fire and/or other natural hazards in open space land protection acquisitions and easements as well as in community separator designations.			
Improve stream corridor conditions via outreach, training, and voluntary actions modeled on successful stream maintenance and habitat restoration programs, based on scientific studies.			

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N2

GOAL N2

Assess and support burned watersheds' recovery, and protect and enhance stream systems to lessen wildfire danger to communities, support water supply and drought tolerance, and provide flood attenuation while sustaining ecological functions and biological diversity.

ACTIONS COMPLETED:

- ✓ The ORR has worked directly with quasi-government and nonprofit partners to assist private property owners with containment BMPs to minimize the risk of debris and toxic material runoff to streams and rivers in early 2018. Efforts with erosion and sediment control BMP installations and maintenance have continued as the 2018/19 rainy season approaches.
- ✓ Ag + Open Space actively assessed, secured, managed and rehabilitated over 2,000 acres of lands it owns that burned. They removed burned structures, infrastructure and hazard trees, replaced burned culverts, and took measures to prevent toxic runoff and protect public safety. They continue to work with easement landowners to support their recovery.
- ✓ Ag + Open Space is conducting a countywide evaluation of functional riparian corridors that will support analyses of post-fire landslide and flooding potential, the Vital Lands Initiative, and serve as input to groundwater management and salmonid recovery.
- ✓ Burned debris, hazards, and sediment were removed within the Sonoma Water right of way, and deployed erosion and sediment best management practices (BMPs), performed stream gauging and water quality sampling during the initial rainy season after the fires.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N2

GOAL N2

Assess and support burned watersheds' recovery, and protect and enhance stream systems to lessen wildfire danger to communities, support water supply and drought tolerance, and provide flood attenuation while sustaining ecological functions and biological diversity.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ Permit Sonoma is overseeing storm water quality through storm water protection programs for rebuilding areas and areas in the burned zones where construction has not yet begun. They are coordinating with the Regional Boards, receiving and investigating citizen complaints, providing information regarding BMP installation methods to property owners and contractors, and doing water quality testing.
- ✓ Regional Parks cleared burned debris to re-open 33.4 miles of trail for public access, removed 488 hazard trees, repaired scores of damaged culverts, bridges and retaining walls, and installed erosion and sedimentation BMPs including 7,500 feet of wattles and log erosion barriers in the immediate aftermath of the fires. They have stabilized slopes and promoted revegetation in locations vulnerable to catastrophic debris flow.
- ✓ In the immediate aftermath of the fires and during rebuilding, TPW removed fire-damaged drainage infrastructure, including culverts, and installed and maintained temporary BMPs to protect against flooding, erosion and sedimentation.
- ✓ Sonoma Water, Regional Parks, Ag + Open Space have participated as part of the Watershed Task Force to conduct supplemental, post-fire assessments in key stream corridors prior to the onset of the 2018/19 rainy season. The assessments will establish baseline conditions to help us identify priority locations for storm patrols and sites that need BMP installations or maintenance.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N2

GOAL N2

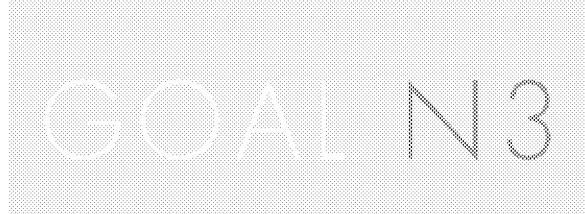
Assess and support burned watersheds' recovery, and protect and enhance stream systems to lessen wildfire danger to communities, support water supply and drought tolerance, and provide flood attenuation while sustaining ecological functions and biological diversity.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ Regional Parks is pursuing funding for stabilizing and re-vegetation of Hood Mountain sites that burned or were fire and damaged by fire suppression efforts to prevent flooding, erosion, and debris flows that could damage areas downstream.
- ✓ TPW, Sonoma Water and other members of the Watershed Task Force are working to assess the technical, permitting, and financial feasibility of reusing some of the hazardous burned trees along public right of ways as beneficial large wood components in aquatic habitat restoration projects.
- ✓ The many County family departments, other public agencies, and community partners in the Watershed Task Force and Watershed Collaborative continue to coordinate and implement mitigation, monitoring, rehabilitation and restoration that protects water quality and other natural resources in and downstream of areas burned in the October 2017 fires.
- ✓ Fire-damaged hillsides and stream corridors, along with firefighting scars, are being assessed for their vulnerability to potential secondary fire hazards such as flooding, erosion, and sedimentation. These types of post-fire concerns often worsen during the second or third year after an event. Information to guide landowner preparedness, protect storm water during rebuild, inform storm patrols and support adaptive response is being developed, updated, and distributed widely.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources



GOAL N3

Build on prior and continuing investments in natural resources acquisitions, monitoring, technical studies and partnerships to integrate best available science into outreach efforts, policy development, regulations, incentives, and land use planning decisions.

PROPOSED ACTIONS:	0-1 YEAR THROUGH 2019	2-3 YEARS 2020-2021	3+ YEARS 2022+
Nurture community awareness and understanding of our fire-adapted landscape and the value of becoming a resilient fire-adapted community using results of post-fire monitoring and research.			
Continue to collect best available scientific information to inform policy development and county investments that protect watersheds and developed communities from natural disasters.			
Consider scientific data about the condition, fire vulnerability, and relative impacts of the 2017 fires on natural and working lands during updates to land use policies, plans, and regulations.			
Improve natural resources hazards and resiliency data management and accessibility between governments, educational institutions, other organizations and the public.			

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N3

GOAL N3

Build on prior and continuing investments in natural resources acquisitions, monitoring, technical studies and partnerships to integrate best available science into outreach efforts, policy development, regulations, incentives, and land use planning decisions.

ACTIONS COMPLETED:

- ✓ The Watershed Collaborative, a group of over 60 organizations, convened to collectively capture initial recovery and resiliency priorities, issues, and data needs. As a result of these discussions, Ag + Open Space generated a report *Living in a Fire Adapted Landscape: Priorities for Resilience, Sonoma County Natural and Working Lands*.
- ✓ Ag + Open Space is actively partnering with other County agencies, non-governmental organizations, resource conservation districts and academic organizations on various research projects and funding requests to evaluate factors affecting fire damages and recovery success.
- ✓ Sonoma Water expanded the stream gauge and precipitation monitoring network and led the development of the “One-Rain” web interface. Access to real-time data improves our ability to assist various jurisdictions as we coordinate storm tracking and monitor potential secondary hazards. Sonoma Water is funded to install one X-Band radar, and has applied for HMGP support to additional X-Band radar to improve storm and flood forecasting. These can be linked to other improvements in meteorological data networks that help address permitting conditions for vegetation management via prescribed burning.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N3

GOAL N3

Build on prior and continuing investments in natural resources acquisitions, monitoring, technical studies and partnerships to integrate best available science into outreach efforts, policy development, regulations, incentives, and land use planning decisions.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ Sonoma Water has expanded the water quality monitoring programs (with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory) to include research on the risks of potential fire-related toxics and/or impairment filtration naturally provided by the river bed. They are leading studies of post-fire soil, runoff and debris flow hazard changes working with the U.S. Geological Survey, Pepperwood Preserve, California State Parks, and Regional Parks.
- ✓ Sonoma Water started pilot programs such as the FireSmart Lake Sonoma project to gather data, conduct outreach and education, and support landowners with fuel reduction and forest management planning and implementation. These programs, in conjunction with the initial fire camera network, the UCCE prescribed fire and grazing workshops, and potential CWPP development to help protect Lake Sonoma, a critical water source watershed.
- ✓ Regional Parks is pursuing CALFIRE Fire Prevention grant funding to support a comprehensive fire planning effort for all parks and open space preserves in the county.
- ✓ Permit Sonoma has applied for HMGP funding to conduct planning studies and update hazard maps, including site specific studies of the Rodgers Creek Fault zone that will be integrated in the Sonoma County LHMP.

ACTIONS & TIMELINES

Natural Resources

GOAL N3

GOAL N3

Build on prior and continuing investments in natural resources acquisitions, monitoring, technical studies and partnerships to integrate best available science into outreach efforts, policy development, regulations, incentives, and land use planning decisions.

ACTIONS COMPLETED (continued):

- ✓ Regional Parks has provided public access and interpretation tours of burned landscapes, including the Nature Heals series for mental health and community learning. They have installed a fire interpretive trail at Shiloh Ranch Regional Park and are facilitating new monitoring, research and post-fire ecological studies at various sites.
- ✓ The Agricultural Commissioner has gathered agricultural disaster information about the effects of fire on agricultural production and the resilience of agricultural lands. This information will improve our understanding of the role of various land cover and conditions, and potential recovery and rehabilitation needs working lands damaged by the fires.
- ✓ UCCE collaborated with researchers and organized citizen-science projects to verify the safety of backyard garden produce, eggs, and related air-quality during and immediately following the fires. They also quickly developed and distributed several science-based technical guides for landowners and community members potentially affected by the fires.
- ✓ The recent Cal Fire grant award for fuels assessment and reduction in northwest Sonoma County will also support FireSafe Sonoma participation to lead landowner engagement, outreach and coordination in those communities.

NEXT STEPS

OVERVIEW

The collaboration between the community, partners, other agencies and the County during the development of the Framework was an important first step to set all of us on a path to recovery and resiliency. In the next phase, under the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, the Office of Recovery and Resiliency will oversee the implementation of proposed actions. A compiled list of all the proposed actions captured during the development of the Framework is posted on the Office of Recovery and Resiliency website in Appendix A.



NEXT STEPS

FUNDING

Like other local governments, the County faces ongoing funding challenges to maintain the level and quality of basic services provided to County residents. The cost of response activities to ensure public safety and continuity of services during and immediately after the October 2017 fires strained resources further. Federal aid is available and anticipated to at least partially reimburse County general funds for response activities. However, funding for most of the recovery efforts including the intermediate and long-term actions described in this Framework is still to be determined.

With the Presidential Disaster Declaration issued on October 10, 2017, the County of Sonoma became eligible for federal disaster assistance funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program. Some of the actions in the Recovery and Resiliency Framework will be funded by these programs. The County is also pursuing other disaster recovery funding available through Economic Development Administration, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grant.

Grants Steering Committee. A Grants Steering Committee represented by County departments and County Administrator's Office staff was formed to identify and prioritize projects that are eligible for federal grant funding. A charter to define the purpose of the Grants Steering Committee for disaster recovery grants and other grants is being developed so that there is a clear understanding of the Committee's long-term scope and role.

Departments submitted federal grant pre-applications and a subset of these were deemed eligible for funding. With input from the Board of Supervisors, the Grants Steering Committee is moving forward to apply for funds based on a variety of factors, some that are out of the County's control. One factor is the County's capacity to handle multiple applications and projects given available resources to dedicate to grant efforts. A number of applications for federal funding were submitted prior to publication of this Recovery and Resiliency Framework. Federal grant processes are lengthy and complicated and will

NEXT STEPS

take place over the next few years. The Office of Recovery and Resiliency will continue to coordinate federal grant activity with County departments and manage and monitor efforts in different departments to meet key federal grant deadlines and to seek reimbursement when appropriate.

The Office of Recovery and Resiliency will continually investigate funding opportunities and work to leverage available resources to support actions in this Framework. The Office of Recovery and Resiliency has the primary responsibility for tracking and reporting all recovery grant activity to the Board of Supervisors. A grants tracking worksheet will be updated on a regular basis and shared with County leadership. The worksheet will be posted on the Office of Recovery and Resiliency website for public accessibility.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Board Approval. The Board's approval of the Framework does not authorize appropriations or represent project approval of the proposed actions in the Framework. Like County Capital Improvement Plan projects, proposed recovery projects will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for consideration as part of the annual County budget approval process. Some recovery project requests may occur off cycle, such as those with timelines tied to other sources of funding, like external grants, or those that do not require General Fund appropriations.

Implementation Planning. Upon the Board's approval of proposed recovery actions, Office of Recovery and Resiliency staff will work closely with department leaders to support the development of more detailed implementation plans. County department leaders will have the most critical role in fully defining and implementing the actions. Many actions will need to be implemented in phases and coordinated with other actions. Some actions will require CEQA review. Timelines will be based on many factors including partner and community input, workforce capacity and availability, funding availability, funding process timelines, and effective coordination with County partners.

NEXT STEPS

Ongoing Coordination. The Office of Recovery and Resiliency and County department leads will set regular, ongoing coordination meetings to ensure continued engagement and alignment with recovery goals. This level of coordination will allow Office of Recovery and Resiliency staff to be informed of project status and any changing circumstances. It will also ensure ongoing coordination with community partners, other agencies, and city leaders by continuing to build relationships and developing a formal plan for optimal, effective interaction. The plan will define where coordination is needed, who should participate, and in what ways coordination is most relevant and productive.

Data Tracking. The Office of Recovery and Resiliency will also partner with department and project leads to track progress, ensure data collection especially for grant reporting compliance, and continually assess workload capacity and other factors critical to project success. In cases where pertinent data is collected by outside organizations, the Office will work with the organization to gain access.

Performance Indicators. Establishing key performance indicators to enable the County to measure progress towards recovery and resilience goals will be a focus in the next phase of Framework development. Some work has already been completed in this area, though some may need to be re-evaluated to apply a resiliency lens. Key indicators and metrics will be used to report progress to the Board of Supervisors and the community.

